

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 /065 W
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R 311842Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9332
INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, FR
SUBJECT: PARIS MUNICIPALS: AN UPDATE

REF: PARIS 2799

SUMMARY. AFTER THREE DAYS OF HIGHLY PUBLICIZED EVENTS, BOTH CHIRAC AND D'ORNANO HAVE STEADFASTLY REAFFIRMED THEIR SEPARATE CANDIDACIES FOR THE PARIS MAYORALTY. IN THIS RESPECT, BARRE'S TASK OF FINDING A THIRD "COMPRO-MISE" CANDIDATE SEEMS DOOMED. ALMOST EVERYONE NOW AC-CEPTS THE "FACT" OF TWO MAJORITY MAYORAL CANDIDATES, AND IN THE SIX WEEKS TO GO BEFORE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WE EXPECT THAT THE FOCUS WILL NOW BE ON ACTIVE CAMPAIGNING BY BOTH CAMPS. END SUMMARY.

1. FRIDAY WAS A BUSY DAY IN THE "BATTLE FOR PARIS". AT THE END OF A HASTILY-CALLED SESSION OF THE PARTY'S
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EXECUTIVE BUREAU, RADICAL SOCIALIST PARTY PRESIDENT PERONNET ANNOUNCED THAT THE RS SECRETARY GENERAL JACQUELINE NEBOUT AND ANOTHER EXECUTIVE BUREAU MEMBER, NICOLE CHOURAQUI, HAD RESIGNED FROM THEIR OFFICIAL PARTY POSITIONS, THUS SPARING THE RS WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN A PAINFUL DECISION TO EXPEL THESE MEMBERS FROM THE PARTY. BOTH NEBOUT AND CHOURAQUI WILL REMAIN MEMBERS OF THE RS

PARTY AND WILL STAY ON CHIRAC'S LISTS. LATER IN THE DAY
IR SECRETARY GENERAL DOMINATI ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS
SEEKING EXPULSION PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THREE IR MEMBERS
(TWO OF WHOM ARE OUTGOING PARIS MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEM-
BERS) WHO ARE ALSO RUNNING ON CHIRAC'S LISTS.

2. EARLY IN THE AFTERNOON GISCARD'S OFFICE ANNOUNCED
THAT HE WOULD SEE CHIRAC THE FOLLOWING MORNING. IN MID-
AFTERNOON, CHIRAC RELEASED TO THE PRESS COPIES OF
CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HIMSELF AND PRIME MINISTER BARRE,
IN ORDER TO "CLARIFY" THE SITUATION SURROUNDING HIS
CANDIDACY. FOR THE MOST PART THE CONTENT OF THESE
LETTERS ONLY REITERATED POSITIONS THAT THESE TWO HAVE
TAKEN PUBLICLY. CHIRAC REAFFIRMED HIS DECISION TO STAY
IN THE RACE UNLESS THERE SHOULD BE SOME "GRAVE AND
COMPELLING REASON" TO THE CONTRARY, AND HE WENT ON TO
ADD THAT ONLY THE PRESIDENT COULD HAVE SUCH REASONS.
BARRE REPLIED THAT HE WOULD TRANSMIT TO GISCARD CHIRAC'S
DESIRE TO MEET WITH HIM. THIS, THEN, WAS THE REASON FOR
THE ELYSEE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A GISCARD-CHIRAC MEETING.

BUT ONLY SEVERAL HOURS LATER THE SITUATION HAD ONCE
AGAIN DETERIORATED. WITH THE PUBLICATION OF THE CHIRAC-
BARRE LETTER EXCHANGE, THE ELYSEE NOTED THAT CHIRAC
HAD REAFFIRMED THE DEFINITIVE NATURE OF HIS CANDIDACY
AND HAD THEREFORE RENDERED EXTRANEIOUS HIS MEETING WITH
THE PRESIDENT. THE GISCARD-CHIRAC MEETING WAS THEREFORE
CANCELLED.

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3. DESPITE SUCH WEEKEND NEWSPAPER HEADLINES AS "THE
END OF THE FIFTH REPUBLIC," AND "THE RUPTURE IS CONSUM-
MATED BETWEEN GISCARD AND CHIRAC," BY SUNDAY NIGHT A
CERTAIN CALM HAD ONCE AGAIN DESCENDED. DURING THE
COURSE OF A RADIO INTERVIEW, BARRE NOTED THAT WHILE HE
DID NOT FEEL THAT CHIRAC'S CANDIDACY SERVED THE INTER-
ESTS OF THE MAJORITY, HE DID NOT THINK THAT THERE WAS
AN INSTITUTIONAL CRISIS. RECALLING THAT THE PARLIAMEN-
TARY MAJORITY REMAINS UNITED IN ITS SUPPORT OF THE
GOVERNMENT AND ITS POLICIES, BARRE NOTED THAT CHIRAC
HAS CONTINUOUSLY UNDERSCORED HIS SUPPORT FOR THE FRENCH
PRESIDENT AND THE BARRE PLAN AND THAT THERE IS NO FUN-
DAMENTAL DISCORD BETWEEN CHIRAC AND THE GOVERNMENT.
BARRE WENT ON TO ADD THAT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF PARIS,
THE MAJORITY CONTINUES TO BE UNITED IN THE PROVINCES,
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AND HAS REACHED ELECTORAL ACCORDS IN OVER 75 PERCENT OF
THOSE CITIES WITH OVER 9,000 INHABITANTS, MANY MORE THAN
THE OPPOSITION.

4. IF THE MAJORITY REMAINS DIVIDED IN PARIS, THE LEFT
IS ALSO EMBROILED IN A CONTROVERSY OVER INTERPRETING
THESE EVENTS. IN AN EDITORIAL IN L'HUMANITE, RENE AN-
DRIEU CALLED THE GISCARD- CHIRAC RIVALRY A PLOT PERPE-
TRATED BY THE PRESIDENT TO SEDUCE THE PUBLIC INTO
BELIEVING THAT PLURALISM EXISTS WITHIN THE
MAJORITY. PS NATIONAL SECRETARY GILLES MARTINET CHARAC-
TERIZED THIS ANALYSIS AS "PERFECTLY IDIOTIC," SAYING
THAT THE PC ANALYSIS IS BASED ON THE FEAR THAT THE PS
IS TRYING TO SEEK AN ACCOMMODATION WITH GISCARD AND
THE CENTRISTS WITHIN THE MAJORITY.

5. WITH BOTH CHIRAC AND D'ORNANO FIRMLY PUSHING THEIR

RESPECTIVE CANDIDACIES, BARRE'S SEARCH FOR A THIRD
"COMPROMISE" CANDIDATE APPEARS TO HAVE FAILED. WHILE
WE DO NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE ELECTORAL
JOCKEYING AMONG MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS TO ELECT A MAYOR
(SEE SEPTTEL), FOR THE TIME BEING BOTH CANDIDATES WILL
BE CONCENTRATING ON GETTING THEMSELVES ELECTED TO THE
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.
RUSH

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